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tions. Each hall is 170 feet long by 60 wide, inside the walls. The lowest story is 18 feet high; the second, or principal story, including the gallery is 30 feet; the upper story 22 feet, and the Mansard story 16 feet in height.

— On the 21st of May, 1877, fourteen carp, only three of which were old enough to spawn this season, were placed in a pond near the residence of Henry Parsons, three miles from this city. On the 10th of October, following, the pond was drawn off, and the original fourteen carp, much grown and in a fine condition and healthy, together with their increase of 1408 young and vigorous fish, were taken out and placed in a breeding pond for next year.

— A Sea Lion and Sturgeon in Combat. In San Francisco bay the angler sometimes hooks a salmon that has had a piece bitten out of the shoulder by the rapacious seal, and certainly the seal lives by masticating fish in whole or part. Recently the passengers on the 10 o'clock, A. M. boat from Oakland, witnessed a tough fight between a sturgeon and a sea lion. The seal bit viciously at the gill openings of its adversary, and showed superior finesse in planning the campaign, while the sturgeon lashed the water powerfully with its unequally lobed tail, and occasionally administered a stunning blow to the seal. Blood flowed profusely and the water was dyed for yards around, but eventually the sturgeon yielded up the ghost, being seized unluckily by the tail and paralyzed in movement by having its only propeller nearly bitten off. Thus wounded and circumvented, it speedily desisted from the battle, and the seal administered the *coup de grace*, and towed his dinner beneath the waves. The spectacle was an exciting one.—*San Francisco Paper.*

— A new species of Chimæra has recently been captured on the Banks. This is the first occasion of this interesting fish so low down the American coast, though a species occurs in British waters.

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PROCEEDINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

California Academy of Sciences, December 17th.—Dr. H. Behr read an interesting paper giving the results of his experiments on the resistance of some species of Eucalyptus to ignition. Whether all the Eucalypti share in this peculiar power of resisting fire, has not been ascertained. His observations had been chiefly directed to the *Eucalyptus rostrata* in Australia, where he had often seen it flourishing in burnt tracts where every other tree had been consumed. He attributed this peculiar property of the wood chiefly to its physiological structure and chemical composition rather than to its vitality.

A general discussion on the Eucalypti followed, in which several members stated that some species of that tree had been found impervious to the attacks of frost as well as heat.

The concluding paper of the evening—on the "Necessity of a Physical Survey of California"—was read by Prof. Davidson. He believed that such a survey was of the utmost importance to the State, and enumerated the advantages that would be equally gained by the farmers, manufacturers and capitalists, from a perfect map illustrating accurately the physical, geographical and geological features of every part of the State. Such a map, he believed, would be of the greatest service for the reclamation of swamp lands, to understand the hydraulics of the Sacramento Valley, to open new avenues of travel and transportation, and to afford valuable information for all the industries. Another important reason why the State should undertake such a work was the fact that the whole system of maps and land surveys adopted by the United States Government is a delusion, and any one who has examined this subject will find them to be full of the most glaring errors and inaccuracies. At another meeting, Dr. A. Kellogg described a new species of "hog peanut" vine named by him *Amphicarpea arizonica;* and a paper by President John Le Conte, of the University of California, on "Mars and his Moons," was read by Mr. S. B. Christy. Mr. Hollister presented to the Academy a specimen of Japanese persimmon, grown in Mr. Hollister's orchard at Santa Barbara. In Japan, it is said, as many varieties are grown as of the apple here, and the sweetness of the fruit is always retained.

He remarked, "The fruit is, I think, the most beautiful of all the fruits I have ever seen, and is the most delicious to the taste. I carried four of them to San Francisco last fall, which weighed three-quarters of a pound each. The fruit is a rich yellow color, and seems more like a ball of wax than a fruit. It is simply splendid. I think it will be the greatest acquisition to our State ever introduced.

"This variety, known as the *Diospyros kaki*, differs materially from the wild persimmon of the Southern States, as it ripens without frost, and is equally palatable whether fresh or dried. The tree is highly ornamental, a prolific bearer, and as hardy as the pear. Its season is from October to March, coming in when fine fruits are scarce. The fruit is of a bright yellow, orange or reddish color, and is pronounced equal to the pear or peach. It is also sufficiently solid to be packed and shipped with safety. It grows to a large size, attaining in some cases a pound each in weight.

"The Japanese persimmon is perfectly adapted to the soil and climate of this country, and may be cultivated precisely as the apple. The grafted trees bear in about four years, seedlings require double that time and are not reliable."

American Geographical Society.—January 31st. The members received the Earl of Dufferin, Governor-General of Canada, and then considered Capt. H. W. Howgate's plan for the exploration of the Arctic regions. Addresses were delivered by Capt. Howgate, Mr. W. C. Bryant, Mr. Bayard Taylor, Hon. I. I. Hayes and Chief-Justice Daly, President of the Society.

Appalachian Mountain Club.—February 13th. Papers were read on the Mt. Desert Hills, by Rev. J. C. Adams, and on Roan Mountain, North Carolina, by Prof. J. H. Huntington.

Boston Society of Natural History.—January 16th. Mr. G. W. Bond made a communication on the Origin of the Merino race of sheep.

American Academy of Arts and Sciences.—February 13th. Prof. B. G. Wilder read a paper on the ærial respiration of Amia.

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SCIENTIFIC SERIALS.[1]

The Geographical Magazine.—January. Language-map of the East Indies, by R. Cust. The north-western frontier of India. The still unexplored parts of South America, by C. R. Markham. The ancient silk-traders' route across central Asia. Affairs in Japan, by R. H. Brunton.

American Journal of Science.—February. Echinoid fauna of Brazil, by R. Rathbun. Poplars of North America, by S. Watson.

Annales des Sciences Naturelles.—December 31, 1877. Mémoire sur l'Embryologie des Némertes, par J. Barrois. Expériences sur le Developpement rubanaire du Cysticergne l'homme, par M. Redon.

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[1] The articles quoted here are, in some cases, selected.